

WASHINGTON COUNTY, UTAH RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN 2009

Section 1 Introduction and Background:

This Resource Management Plan has been created as a supplement to, and a part of, the Washington County General Plan, and is intended to specifically address the challenges which exist, and continually arise, as a result of the large areas of state and federal lands which lie within the county boundaries. With a large portion of the county managed by the federal or state government, the interface which exists between the public lands and the private, commercial, and municipal lands is a constant, overlying influence in county planning decisions and county economic activity.

The Resource Management Plans (RMP's) developed by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the United States Forest Service (USFS), Land And Resource Management Plans (LRMP's), are the basis for nearly all natural resource management policy and decision making activities that affect federal lands. Because the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), mandates that all these RMP's are to be consistent with state and local plans "to the maximum extent...consistent with federal law..." it is essential that counties develop their own resource management plans to reflect local perspectives and positions regarding these interests.

In 2004, the State of Utah Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (GOPB), under the direction of the State Planning coordinator, developed a "toolkit" to assist county governments in preparing public land and natural resource management plans. The purpose of the Toolkit and the resulting county tools necessary to work more effectively with land and natural resource agencies, and ensure that the interests of local governments are adequately considered and addressed in agency planning and decision-making process.

The CRMP toolkit recommends that county resource management plans be developed and organized in a manner similar to the planning approach and document format used by federal agencies in their planning processes. This approach should increase the usefulness and impact of county plans in federal planning and decision-making processes. By using a similar format, it will be easier to compare county resource management plans to agency-prepared documents. This approach should increase the usefulness and impact of county plans in federal planning and decision-making processes. In general, this structure centers around two important planning elements:

- A. Descriptions of the Desired Future Condition; and,
- B. Methods for ongoing Monitoring to assess progress in moving from the existing condition to the desired condition

As a result of these guidelines, Washington County is engaged in the update of the Washington County General Plan in an effort to better address the many complicated issues which arise from the interrelationship between the public and the private lands. To address this need, the county began by creating a collaborative working group of citizens and stakeholders, including public land managers, to consider many issues affecting the public land in the county. This study group was a diverse group of stake holders including representatives from the following groups: (see table 1) their goal was to develop recommendations that could be used by the county in developing the County Land Use Plan that was approved by the County Commission and submitted to Congress for their approval.

Table 1
Group Representation In
County Planning Effort
on BLM lands

Three Washington County Commissioners
County Planning Director
County Public Works Director
District Ranger, Dixie National Forrest
Farm Bureau - Cattlemen's Association
Mining and Mineral Development
Economic Development Council
Division of Wildlife Resources
Virgin River Land Trust
Off-road All Terrain Vehicle Association
Dixie Wildlife Federation
Washington County Water Conservation District
Southern Utah Home Builders Association
Washington County Mayor's Association
Utah State House of Representatives
Outdoor Recreation Industry
Southern Utah Wilderness Association
The Wilderness Society
Sierra Club
Lieutenant Governor
State and Institutional Trust Lands
Shivwits Band
Blue Ribbon Coalition
Representative Matheson's Office
Senator Bennett's Office
Bureau of Land Management - St. George Resource Area Manager
(Technical support)
Zion National Park (Technical support)

This outstanding group of interested resource individuals, agreed to meet on a regular basis to examine all of the public land in the County, particularly BLM and USFS land, on an area by area basis both in meetings at the county building to review maps showing topography, and land relationships, and through day-long field trips to visit each of the areas identified to be studied. Recommendations were made for each area relative to such things as road access, need for utility corridors, wilderness characteristics based upon various wilderness proposals that had been made in the past, the future of the Habitat Conservation Area, and other areas of interest identified by any of the stake holders.

The outcomes from this study group provided the basis of the long range plan for the management of the public land in the county. This study and the accompanying maps provided the information used in the preparation of the plan that was submitted to Congress for their consideration. The findings were nearly unanimous. Once in the hands of Congress, changes were made to the plan to satisfy various congressional leaders in both houses of Congress and other influential lobbying groups prior to the final adoption of the land use plan by Congress. Not everyone was satisfied with the Congressional outcome, but it did put to rest the issue of wilderness areas in Washington County, that had been undecided since the passage of Section 603 of FLPMA , many years before. Now the challenge is for the county to work closely with the federal land managers to make the necessary changes to meet the requirements laid down by Congressional action.

There are basically two parts to the update of the Plan. One involves the public lands in the county which comprise approximately 84% of the total land area, and the privately owned lands making up approximately 16% of the land area of the County.

During the time that the county land use bill was being reviewed by both houses of Congress, the county undertook a companion study of the private lands. This effort was known as the Vision Dixie project to provide information relative to the growth of the county, and the use of the private land therein. The project also established principles associated with maintaining key natural features throughout this county and how public lands should support our communities in this effort. The county, along with most of the cities and towns in the county, has signed on to using the Vision Dixie principles in their planning efforts. These actions should be useful in working with the federal agencies in planning on the public lands.

The Vision Dixie Project brought together all residents of the county who had a desire to be involved and indicate their preferences for future development under the direction of a professional consultant. The work was overseen by an Executive Committee and a Steering Committee to make sure that all issues were adequately considered.

Table 2
Vision Dixie Executive Committee

Last Name	First Name	Represents
Bracken	Lee	Mayor, Enterprise
Clove	Terrill	Mayor, Washington
Cluff	Pat	Mayor, Springdale
Grow	John	Mayor, Virgin
Hirschi	Scott	Economic Development
Law	Trudy	Mayor, Leeds
McArthur	Daniel	Mayor, St. George
McGuire	Dan	Mayor, Rockville
Powell	Ken	Mayor, Toquerville
Reep	Mary	Mayor, Apple Valley
Rosenberg	Rick	Mayor, Santa Clara
Webster	Joel	Mayor, New Harmony
Zitting	David	Mayor, Hildale

Table 3
Vision Dixie Steering Committee

Last Name	First Name	Represents
Alder	Lin	Springdale, UT
Almquist	Gil	St. George, UT
Behrmann	Russ	Chamber of Commerce
Bracken	Lee	Mayor, Enterprise
Clove	Terrill	Mayor, Washington
Cluff	Pat	Mayor, Springdale
Crisp	Jim	BLM
Empey	Mike	Congressman Matheson
Grow	John	Mayor, Virgin
Hirschi	Scott	Economic Development
Hunt	Edna	St. George, UT
Iverson	Jeri	Washington City
Kane	Terri	Intermountain Health Care
Kocinski-Puc	Lorri	Citizen at Large
Koeber	Kayla	Merrill Lynch
Law	Trudy	Mayor, Leeds
McArthur	Daniel	Mayor, St. George
McGuire	Dan	Mayor, Rockville
Paddock	Doug	Central, UT
Perkins	Kent	St. George City
Powell	Ken	Mayor, Toquerville
Reep	Mary	Mayor, Apple Valley
Rosenberg	Rick	Mayor, Santa Clara
Sapp	Carol	SUHBA
Sizemore	Ken	Five County AOG
Stratton	Donald	Hurricane, UT
Webster	Joel	Mayor, New Harmony
Whalen	Jane	Hurricane, UT
Wixom	Rick	Springdale Town Manager
Zitting	David	Mayor, Hildale

The Resource Management Plan and the General Plan will be a template for all public land related decisions allowing the county to measure public land management decisions and management practices.

Section Two Legal Authority

The authority for Washington County to plan for the management of natural resources within the county derives directly from state law. In addition to this authority, provisions of federal law allow counties to participate in, and influence, the natural resource and land management plans of federal agencies both through use of duly adopted county plans and through cooperative agency participation in the planning efforts for the federal lands. This section is intended as a broad outline of the parameters for influence, not as an exhaustive dissertation of all possibilities.

County Planning Authority:

Section §17-27a-401 of the Utah code provides that “each county shall prepare and adopt a comprehensive, long-range general plan,” which addresses, among other provisions, the:

1. Present and future needs of the county; and
2. Growth and development of all or any part of the land within the unincorporated positions of the county.

It may also provide for:

1. Health, general welfare, safety, energy production, transportation, prosperity, civic activities, aesthetics, and recreational, educational, and cultural opportunities
2. The efficient and economical use, conservation, and production of the supply of:
 - a. Food and water,
 - b. Drainage, sanitary and other facilities and resources,
 - c. The use of energy conservation and solar and renewable energy resources,
 - d. The protection of urban development,
 - e. The protection or promotion of moderate income housing,
 - f. The protection and promotion of air quality,
 - g. Historic preservation,
 - h. Identifying future uses of land that are likely to require an expansion or significant modification of services or facilities provided by each affected entity,
 - i. An official map
3. In addition, the law provides that the Plan may define the local customs, local

culture, and the components necessary for the county's economic stability. (Utah Code §17-27a-41 (4) Moreover, a county may get access to certain data gathered and held by state agencies that may be of assistance in the county's planning process. (Utah Code §17-27a-402) However, the authority to plan does not give the county any direct jurisdiction over lands owned by the state or federal governments. (Utah Code §17-27a-304.

Federal Land and Natural Resource Planning:

Two of the major federal landowners in Utah, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the National Forest Service, are required to engage in land and natural resource planning processes, which can affect the use and development of natural resources. The Bureau of Land Management is required by Section 202 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 [FLPMA] to "develop, maintain, and... revise land use plans which provide by tracts or areas for the use of the [BLM] lands." Similarly, the Forest Service is required to "develop, maintain, and... revise land and resource management plans for units of the National Forest System." (16 U.S.C. 1604(a)

Coordination and consistency with state, local and tribal government plans:

Both the BLM and the Forest Service are required to coordinate their land and resource planning efforts with those of state, local. And tribal jurisdictions. For example, the BLM is required to:

1. Become appraised of State, local and tribal land use plans
2. Assure that consideration is given to that State, local and tribal plans that are germane to plans for public lands
3. Assist in resolving.... inconsistencies between Federal and non-Federal Government plans. (43 U.S.C. §1712(b)(9)

Specifically, state and local officials are "authorized to furnish advice to the [BLM] with respect to the development and revision of land use plans.... guidelines....rules and regulations for the public lands." (43 U.S.C. §1712(b)(9). This is significant because land use plans adopted by the BLM are required to "be consistent with state and local plans to the extent consistent with Federal law and the purposes of [FLPMA]" (43 U. S.C. §1712(b)(9). The duly adopted regulations of the BLM further define this consistency requirement by requiring that the BLM's resource management plans shall be "consistent with officially approved or adopted resource related plans, and the policies and programs contained therein, of....State and local governments, and Indian tribes, so long as the guidance and resource management plans are also consistent with the purposes, policies, and programs of federal laws and regulations applicable to public lands." (43 C.F.R. §1610.3-1)

The BLM regulations also provide that “in the absence of officially approved or adopted resource management plans of State and local governments... [Federal] resource managements plans shall, to the maximum extent practical, be consistent with officially approved and adopted resource related policies and programs of state and local governments.’ However, as before, this consistency only applies to the extent the policies and programs are “consistent with the policies, programs, and provisions of federal laws and regulations applicable to public lands.” (43 C.F.R. §1610.3-2(b)).

The Forest Service is required to coordinate “with the land and resource management planning processes of State and local governments.” (16 U.S.C. §1640(a)). The Forest Service’s planning regulations state that “the Responsible [Forest Service] Official must provide opportunities for the coordination of Forest Service planning efforts with those of other resource management agencies.” Furthermore, the agency’s planning regulations provide that the Responsible Official should seek assistance, where appropriate, from other state and local governments.... to help address management issues or opportunities.” (40 C.F.R. §1506.2(d)).

Federal Planning Criteria:

Counties may use duly adopted plans, programs or policies to directly influence federal natural resource and land planning efforts by informing the federal agencies of the plans and their provisions. As part of these plans, counties may want to make known their interpretation of the criteria the federal planning agencies must consider as land and resource management plans are developed. This could, for example, be used to define, among other things, the desired future conditions for the county’s economy, lifestyle, or recreational needs of the citizens, and the necessary use of the federal natural resources to achieve these desired future conditions.

Forest Service:

The National Forests were originally set aside to provide a continuous supply of timber and for the protection of water sources for local communities and agricultural needs. Later, through the adoption of the Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act of 1960, Congress determined that the forests should be “administered for outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, and fish and wildlife purposes,” which purposes were declared to be “supplemental to, but not in derogation of” the original purposes. (16 U.S.C. § 528)

The Forest Service is required to “use a systematic interdisciplinary approach to achieve integrated consideration of physical, biological, economic, and other sciences” in its land and resource plans. The Forest Service must assure that the plans “provide for the multiple use and sustained yield of the products and services obtained there from in accordance with the Multiple-Use Sustained-Yield Act of 1960, and, in particular, include coordination of outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, fish and wildlife, and wilderness.” The plans must determine forest management systems, harvesting levels [of timber] and procedures,” based upon all of the uses mentioned above, the definitions of multiple use and sustained yield as laid out in the law, and the availability of lands and their suitability for resource management. (16 U.C.S. §1604(b) and (e)).

The regulations of the Forest Service specifically define principles of planning Forest Service's natural resources.
(36 C.F.S. § 219.3)

Land management planning is an adaptive management process that includes social, economic, and ecological evaluation; plan development, plan amendment, and plan economic, and ecological evaluation; plan development, plan amendment, and plan revision, and monitoring. The overall aim of planning is to produce responsible land management for the National Forest System based on useful and current information and guidance. Land management and planning guides the Forest Service in fulfilling its responsibilities for stewardship of the National Forest System to best meet the needs of the American people.
(36.C.F.R. § 219.3(a).

The Forest Service is also required, as part of the development and interpretation of information for plans, to consider and incorporate the concept and conditions of sustainability. "Sustainability has been interrelated and interdependent elements; social economic, and ecological." (36 C.F.R. § 29.10).

The overall goal of the social and economic elements of sustainability is to contribute to sustaining social and economic systems within the plan area. To understand the social and economic contributions that National Forest System lands presently make, and may make in the future, the [Forest Service] must evaluate relevant economic and social conditions and trends during plan development (36 C.F.R. § 219.10(a).

Expectations for ecological sustainability as well as ecosystem and species diversity are also provided.

Bureau of Land Management:

FLPMA provides that the BLM must manage the lands under its jurisdiction (called public lands) "in a manner that will protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archeological values" and will provide for, among other things, "outdoor recreation and human occupancy and uses," and "food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals." However, the BLM must specifically manage the public lands "in a manner which recognizes the Nation's need for domestic sources of minerals, food, timber, and fiber from the public lands." (43 U.S.C. § 1701 (8) and (12).

The BLM is required to "use and observe the principles of multiple use and sustained yield" and, just as the Forest Service must "use a systematic and interdisciplinary approach to achieve integrated consideration of physical, biological, economic, and other sciences" in the preparation of its plans. (43 U.S.C. § 1712(c)(1) and (2). The BLM must also "consider present and potential uses of the public lands" and "provide for the compliance with applicable pollution control laws, including State and Federal air, water, noise, or other pollution standards or implementation plans." (43 U.S.C. § 1712(c)(5) and (8).

Multiple-Use and Sustained Yield:

Both the Forest Service and the BLM are required to manage the lands under their jurisdiction pursuant to the principles of “multiple use” and “sustained yield.” These terms have been defined within the provisions of FLPMA for the BLM and within the provisions of the Multiple-Use Sustained Yield Act of 1960 for the Forest Service. Both definitions are lengthy and worthy of careful study. It is apparent that the definitions are not crystal clear, leading to differing interpretations concerning development or preservation of the natural resources and the environment.

The definitions do state, however, that multiple uses are to be considered in the context of the best combination of land use that meet the present and future needs of the nation with respect to recreation, range, timber, minerals, watershed, fish and wildlife, and natural, scenic, and historical values. “Furthermore, it states that these resources are to be managed in a “harmonious and coordinated” manner that does not lead to “permanent impairment the productivity of the land and quality of the environment.” Finally, multiple use does not, by definition, mean the greatest economic return or the greatest unit output” for the natural resources. (43 U.S.C. § 1702 c) See also (16 U.S.C. § 531(a). For the Forest Service, the “establishment and maintenance of areas of wilderness” is specifically determined to be consistent with the principle of multiple use. (16 U.S.C. 529).

The term “sustained yield” is defined to mean the achievement of a “high level annual or regular periodic output of the various renewable resources of the public land consistent with multiple use.” (43 U.S.C. § 1702(h). See also 16 U.S.C. § 531(b).

National Environmental Policy Act and Cooperating Agency Status

Preparation of land and natural resource management plans by BLM and the Forest Service is a major federal action requiring the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). (42 U.S.C. § 4331 *et. seq.*) NEPA requires federal agencies to fully disclose the nature and condition of the environment within the area of interest. Under NEPA, agencies must formulate various alternatives for proposed management, and to compare those alternatives to a “no-action” alternative of continuing the current management scheme. NEPA specifically requires the agency preparing the EIS to seek decisions that, among other things, “attain the widest range of beneficial uses of the environment without degradation,” “preserve important historic, cultural and natural aspects of our national heritage,” “achieve a balance between population and resource use which will permit high standards of living and a wide sharing of life’s amenities.” (42 U.S.C. 4331 (b).

The development of an EIS by a federal agency as a part of the process to decide upon a land and resource management plan or proposed project has a number of well established steps. Each of these steps provides as an opportunity for comment by local government based upon their own plans and policies. These steps, in general, are:

1. The “scoping” of the issues
2. Preparation of an analysis of the management situation
3. Preparation of the various alternatives with the associated necessary management scenarios and conditions
4. Issuance of a “draft EIS” for public comment
5. Issuance of a final EIS and the “proposed record of decision,” which lays out the proposed final decision including the terms and conditions for management of the lands and natural resources for the life of the plan or for that specific project

Issuance of the proposed record of decision is followed by a period for protest by interested parties, which, upon resolution of the protests, is followed by adoption of the record of decision and implementation of the plan.

For plans of the BLM, the Governor of the State is given an opportunity for a consistency review immediately following the issuance of the Proposed Record of Decision. BLM is required to “identify any known inconsistencies with State or local plan, policies, or programs,” and to “assist in resolving, to the extent practical, inconsistencies between Federal and non-Federal Government plans.” The Governor is given sixty (60) days to “identify inconsistencies and provide recommendations in writing” in response. The BLM must accept the recommendations of the Governor if the BLM State Director determines that the recommendations “provide for a reasonable balance between the national interest” and the State’s interest. (43 U.S.C. §1712(b)(9) and 43 C.F.R. § 1610.3-2(e). See also 40 C.F.R. - 1506.2(d).

The Federal Council on Environmental Quality has issued regulations related to the implementation of NEPA. One of these regulations provides for the elimination of duplication with state and local processes. The regulation requires agencies to “cooperate” with state and local agencies to the fullest extent possible to reduce duplication between NEPA and state and local requirements. This cooperation specifically includes:

1. Joint planning processes
2. Joint environmental research and studies
3. Joint public hearings
4. Joint environmental assessments (40 C.F.R. § 1506.2(b))

The Council on Environmental Quality has also supported an invitation to state and local governments to become “cooperating agencies” in the preparation of federal land and natural resource management plans and associated EIS’s. The invitation to become a cooperating

agency is not based on the fact that state or local government are entities that may be affected by the outcome of the process. Instead, cooperating agency status is specifically based upon state or local government's position as professionals having jurisdiction by law in the planning area or professionals holding special expertise in an issue that will be addressed in the analysis or decision. (memo from James Connaughton, Chairman of the CEQ). This status does not relieve the federal agency of the responsibility as the decision-maker, and does not guarantee a decision that the responsibility as the decision-maker, and does not guarantee a decision that the cooperating agency may necessarily favor. Cooperating agency status does allow the cooperators to participate in the scoping process, the inventory of data and analysis of the current situation process, the preparation of alternatives, the impact analysis, and in the current situation process, the preparation of alternatives, the impact analysis, and in the preparation of the draft and final EIS's. Participation as a cooperating agency in federal planning efforts will specifically require the cooperators to respect the timing and confidentiality inherent in the federal process. Failure to adhere to these conditions may lead to revocation of cooperating agency status. BLM has proposed a regulatory rule change that would solidify the cooperating agency concept in BLM planning, stating that a "cooperating agency relationship" would implement the requirement under FLPMA to coordinate with state and local government (69 F.R. 43378.)

State Planning Coordinator Responsibilities:

The State Planning Coordinator is authorized to prepare plans, programs, and policies for the state that, among other things:

1. "incorporate the plans, policies programs, processes, and desired outcomes of the counties where the federal lands or natural resources are located, to the maximum extent consistent with state and federal law..."
2. "develop, research, and use factual information, legal analysis, and statements of desired future conditions," for the regions of the state "as necessary to support the plans, policies, programs, processes, and desired outcomes of the state and counties where the federal lands, or natural resources are located"
3. Establish and coordinate agreements with federal agencies that facilitate state and local participation in the development, revision and implementation of federal plans.

(Utah Code § 63-38d-401)

The state law continues by establishing findings that shall be considered by state and local governments as they interact with the federal agencies in the preparation of federal land and natural resource management plans. These findings provide the framework for the necessary considerations of state and local plans and policies, which the federal agencies are required to consider as a part of their planning efforts. The findings include a definition of multiple use that emphasizes support for state and local plans that include watersheds timber, food, fiber, livestock and wildlife forage, and minerals, necessary to meet the present needs and future economic

growth and community expansion, as well as meet the recreational needs and the personal and business related transportation needs, of the citizens of the state without impairing the productivity of the land.

The findings also indicate, for example, that; the federal government must seek water rights within the state appropriation system; federal agencies must support the purposes of the school trust lands compact in their land management decisions; development of the solid, fluid, and gaseous minerals of the state is important to the state's economy ; wildlife is an important part of the recreational opportunity; within the state, and the economy, Furthermore, the findings indicate parameters for state and local government support or opposition to specific federal land planning issues such as areas of critical environmental concern, wild and scenic river studies, exchanges of land, agricultural production and open space management of forests in a healthy manner, off-highway vehicle use, and predator control. (See Utah Code 63-38d-401(6) and (7) for the complete listing and findings.)

Federal Advisory Committee Act:

The Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972 (FACA) was enacted to formalize and stabilize the process which federal agencies receive advice from the interested parties. It establishes conditions under which federal agencies may establish such committees; how they must be composed and chartered, and requires meetings and activities to be open to the public. FACA does not affect the requirement under FLPMA to coordinate with state and local governments, nor does it affect the establishment of a cooperating agency relationship. FACA also does not apply to any state or local committee or other group including land and natural resource utilization issues. (5 U.S.C. Appendix)

Section Three Economic Conditions

This section of the Washington County Resource Management Plan provides a basic overview of Washington County economic and demographic characteristics. This section of the Resource Management Plan was prepared as an economic report by the Bureau of Economic and Business Research, at the University of Utah in June, 2008.

Table 4

An Analysis of Long-Term Economic Growth in Southwestern Utah: Past and Future Conditions

Current Demographic and Economic Baseline of Washington County

Population

Population (2007)	140,908
Average Annual Growth Rate, 1970–2007	6.5%
Net In-Migration, 1970–2007	99,453
Median Age (2006)	30.0
Households (2007)	49,504
Median Household Income (1999)	\$37,212

Employment

Total Farm, Nonfarm and Proprietor Employment (2005)	64,095
Average Annual Growth Rate, 1970–2005	7.7%
Farm Employment as a Share of Total Employment	0.8%
Nonagricultural Employment (2006)	51,527
Average Annual Growth Rate, 1970–2006	8.0%
Employer Firms (2006)	4,851
Major Nonagricultural Employment Sectors (2006)	<u>Number</u> <u>Share</u>
Construction	8,289 16.1%
Retail Trade	7,747 15.0%
Health Care and Social Assistance	6,739 13.1%
Government	6,141 11.9%
Accommodation and Food Services	5,684 11.0%

Retail Sales

Taxable 2006 Retail Sales (millions)	\$1,617.6
Average Annual Inflation-Adjusted Growth Rate, 1980–2006	8.5%
Major Retail Categories (millions)	<u>Amount</u> <u>Share</u>
General Merchandise	\$377.5 23.3%
Motor Vehicles	\$330.3 20.4%
Building and Garden	\$241.3 14.9%
Per Capita Retail Sales (2006)	\$11,991

Wages and Income

Total Nonagricultural Wages (2006, millions)	\$1,431.6
Average Annual Inflation-Adjusted Growth Rate, 1970–2006	8.3%
Average Monthly Wage (2006)	\$2,315
Total Personal Income (2005, millions)	\$2,689.4
Average Annual Inflation-Adjusted Growth Rate, 1970–2005	7.6%

Housing, New Construction, and Real Estate

Total Housing Units (2007)	<u>Number</u> <u>Share</u>
Total Occupied Units (share of total housing units)	56,316
Owner-Occupied (share of total occupied)	47,485 84.3%
Renter-Occupied (share of total occupied)	39,065 82.3%
Recreation or Seasonal Units (share of total housing units)	8,420 17.7%
Median Sales Price of Existing Single-Family Homes (2006)	6,852 12.2%
New Permit-Authorized Dwelling Units (2007)	\$235,070
Value of Residential Construction (2007, millions)	1,954
Value of Nonresidential Construction (2007, millions)	\$351.2
Land Ownership (2007)	\$138.5
Privately Owned	<u>Acres</u> <u>Share</u>
Federally Owned	273,700 17.6%
State Owned	1,161,850 74.7%
Total Area	90,689 5.8%
	1,556,000 100%

Dixie State College

Total Annualized FTE Enrollment (2006–07)	4,202
Total Degrees Awarded	1,317

Tax Revenue

Property Tax Receipts (2006, millions)	\$88.4
Sales Taxes Disbursed (2006, millions)	\$21.5

Note: All dollar figures are in current dollars.

Sources: Utah Population Estimates Committee; U.S. Census Bureau; Utah Governor's Office of Planning and Budget; Bureau of Economic and Business Research, University of Utah; Utah Department of Workforce Services; U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis; USDA 2002 Census of Agriculture; Utah State Tax Commission; Utah Automated Geographic Reference Center; Utah System of Higher Education.

Executive Summary

By all measures, Washington County has been the economic driver of the southwest region since 1970. The county's unprecedented growth makes it the epicenter of activity in the region, as it garners an ever-increasing share of the region's population, employment, and retail sales.

In 2007, an estimated 140,908 persons lived in Washington County, an increase of 90,354 people since 1970. The county's population almost doubled for each of the three decades from 1970 to 2000, averaging an amazing 6.5 percent growth annually—the highest rate of any county in the state.

Population in the region is becoming more concentrated in Washington County. In 2007, seven of ten residents in the region lived in Washington County compared with one in three in 1970. The county's current population exceeds that of Iron County by almost 100,000.

Net migration is County primary driver of population growth in the county. Cumulative net immigration into Washington County since 1970 approaches 100,000 and accounts for almost 80 percent of the county's population growth. This is a pattern consistent with Arizona and Nevada, but not the state of Utah as a whole.

The spectacular growth in Washington County is the culmination of a moderate climate, the rich natural resource endowment of the area, national migration patterns, aging Baby Boomers, and access to road and air transportation.

The age distribution of Washington County is distinctive because of the overrepresentation of older age groups. In 2007, an estimated 20 percent of the county's population was at least 60 years old, roughly double the state rate.

The minority population of the county increased from 1,895 in the 1990 census to 8,061 by 2000. This increase of 6,166 represents 15 percent of the county's population growth from 1990 to 2000.

The largest minority population is Hispanic (59 percent), nearly half of whom are foreign-born. Based on the age distribution of this population (concentrated in prime young working ages with more males than females), it is evident that Hispanics have migrated to Washington County for economic opportunity, not retirement living.

In 2006, nonfarm employment totaled 51,527, increasing at an average rate of 8 percent annually since 1970; more than double the statewide rate of 3.4 percent. In recent years, job growth has been as high as the 9 percent mark.

Washington County is the economic engine for employment growth in the southwest region, adding 48,330 nonfarm jobs to the region's economic base since 1970—almost three-quarters of all new jobs in the region from 1970 to 2006.

An Analysis of Long-Term Economic Growth in Southwestern Utah: Past and Future Conditions

The main drivers of this growth have been the trade and service sectors, and to a lesser extent construction and government. From 1970 to 2006, trade and services added nearly 29,000 jobs. Construction added almost 8,000 and government about 5,200.

Reflecting the major employment gains over the period, total inflation-adjusted wages increased from \$80.1 million in 1970 to \$1.4 billion in 2006, accounting for two-thirds of all wages in the region.

The real average monthly wage in the county increased from \$2,089 in 1970 to \$2,315 in 2006 (in constant 2006 dollars), and went from about 3 percent below the regional average in 1970 to nearly 4 percent above it in 2006.

Most of the region's largest employers are located in Washington County. Two companies, Wal-Mart Distribution and IHC's Dixie Regional Medical Center, employ at least 1,000 people. No other county in the region has an employer of this size.

Washington County has net out-commuting; that is, more people left the county to work than came in. Almost half of those who commuted outside the county to work went outside the state, primarily to Nevada. Twenty-five percent of out-commuters went to other counties within the region. Almost 40 percent of people commuting to Washington County came from counties within the southwest region. The largest share of these (86 percent) came from Iron County. About one-third of in-commuters came from outside the state, primarily from Arizona.

Almost 18 percent of land in Washington County is privately owned, the second highest rate in the region. The federal government owns 75 percent of Washington County (most of which is managed by the Bureau of Land Management, BLM) and SITLA owns about 5 percent. SITLA's holdings include some of the most developable land in the county.

The BLM has been a source of developable land over the years and can sell, auction, or convey land to cities. Over the past 10 years, BLM has transferred about 17,000 acres for private and public use. In recent years, challenges by special interest groups have made the transfer process long and difficult, a situation that will likely continue.

Washington County is the dominant retail market in the five-county southwest region. In 2006, it captured almost 76 percent of all retail sales in the region (\$1.6 billion in sales), and had the highest retail sales per capita at \$11,991. The rapid growth in the retail sector has been fueled by the county's population expansion as well as by a growing number of shoppers coming from other counties in the region. By way of comparison, 2006 total retail sales in Salt Lake County were \$11.1 billion and per capita sales were \$8,192.

In 2007, Washington County's housing inventory was 56,316 units. Recreational and seasonal units account for 12.2 percent of the inventory, comprising primarily time-share and second homes. Of

the 47,485 occupied units, 82 percent were owner-occupied and the remaining 17.7 percent were rentals. More than one-third of the county's housing inventory has been built since 2000.

Over the past 30 years, new home construction in Washington County has outpaced that of all other counties in the region combined. The number of permits issued in Washington

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The number of building permits issued in Washington County is more than double the total number of permits issued in Beaver, Kane, Garfield, and Iron counties.

The building permit value of nonresidential construction since 1975 in Washington County totals about \$2.1 billion. For the past four years, the value of nonresidential construction in Washington County has exceeded \$100 million annually. This marks 2004 to 2007 as the period of greatest commercial development in the history of Washington County. A record high was established in 2006 with \$184 million of nonresidential construction. The single largest nonresidential project in Washington County's history is the IHC Dixie Medical Center, which received a permit in 2002 valued at \$79.4 million.

Dixie State College is one of two institutions of higher education in the region and has been one of the county's major employers for many years. The college offers associate's and baccalaureate degrees as well as numerous certificate programs.

Enrollment has more than tripled at Dixie over the past 25 years, growing from 1,380 annualized full-time equivalents in the 1981–82 academic years to 4,202 in 2006–07. Since 1981, enrollment growth has been fairly steady until recently. Enrollment peaked at 4,583 in 2003–04 and has been declining in the past few years (Table 10). These declines were the result of several changes initiated by Dixie in 2003–04, and included (1) eliminating the summer workshop student count from the fall enrollment count, (2) transferring certain certificate programs off campus to the Dixie Applied Technology College, and (3) a change in scholarship policy requiring 12 credit hours per term instead of 15.

Enrollment numbers provided for spring 2008 show increases in both headcount and FTE at Dixie over spring 2007. Dixie's headcount increased by 96, for a total of 4,908, and its FTE count increased by 112, for a total of 3,562.

Since the 1981-82 academic years, the total number of degrees and certificates awarded at Dixie has increased 410 percent, from 258 to 1,317. Most of the degrees awarded at Dixie are associate's degrees, which totaled 864 in 2006–07. Dixie's most popular program is the associate's degree in general studies (684 of 864 in 2007).

Dixie currently offers bachelor's degrees in 10 fields. Dixie's bachelor's degree program is relatively new (in place since 2000–01) but very successful. In 2006–07, a total of 134 bachelor's degrees were awarded, up from just one degree in 2000–01. The largest numbers of degrees were awarded in business (55) and education (48).

Enrollment growth at Dixie is projected to increase by a little more than one-third by 2020.

However, given the demographic and economic growth projections for the southwest region in general, and for Washington County in particular, enrollments may be much higher than forecast. The era of extraordinary growth in Washington County is projected to continue well into the future. From 2000 to 2020, Washington County's population is expected to triple, growing by 188,760 persons to 279,864. This represents an average rate of about 5.9 percent annually—exceeding the regional annual growth rate of 4.9 percent *and* the statewide annual growth rate of 2.5 percent.

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Over time, population in the southwest region will become more concentrated in Washington County. Because Washington County garners about 82 percent of the projected increase in the region's population from 2000 to 2020, by the end of the period 75 percent of people living in the southwest will reside in the county.

The working-age population is projected to grow the fastest, more than tripling in size. By 2020 there will be 119,191 more persons between the ages of 18 and 64 living in Washington County than there were in 2000. The school-age population will increase almost 180 percent, from 28,326 in 2000 to 79,260 by 2020.

Washington County will retain its role as a retirement community, even though the retirement age population is projected to grow more slowly than either the working-age or school-age populations. From 2000 to 2020, the retirement-age population (65+) is projected to increase at an annual rate of 4 percent, slightly higher than the statewide rate of 3.7 percent. Further, about 77 percent of the retirement population in the region will be living in Washington County in 2020. In absolute numbers, only three counties in Utah are projected to have more growth in the retirement-age population; these include Salt Lake, Utah, and Davis.

The employment projections for Washington County show the addition of 90,000 new jobs or about 81 percent of all new job growth in the region from 2005 to 2020. By the end of the period, 73 percent of all jobs in the region will be in Washington County, up from 69 percent in 2005.

The fastest-growing sector will be education and health services (201 percent increase), followed by government (169 percent), professional and business services (157 percent), and leisure and hospitality (143 percent). Natural resources and mining is the only sector projected to decline over the period.

The most significant employment shift projected for the county is the increase in education and health services. In 2005, this sector's share of employment was about 12 percent. By 2020, its share is projected to increase to 15.2 percent.

The long-term growth prospects for Washington County remain very favorable. The forces combining to promote growth, climate, natural resources, and aging Baby Boomers moving into rural communities in the West, will continue to benefit the county well into the future. Washington County's proximity to more expensive communities in the southwestern U.S. is a significant advantage. Although housing costs in the county are high compared with other counties in the

region, Washington County is a low-cost alternative to “sunbelt” living in Phoenix, Las Vegas, and Palm Springs.**

Section Four

Statement on Existing Management Conditions

Washington County is located in the southwest corner of the State of Utah. It has historically been a rural county, and except for the St. George metropolitan area of St. George Ivins, Santa Clara, and Washington, is still largely rural. The population and growth centers are located in the above areas, which, along with the Hurricane valley are the centers of growth and development.

Washington County is part of a high desert climate similar to other parts of the Colorado Plateau. Summers are generally hot and dry with daytime temperatures regularly in excess of one hundred degrees. Evening temperatures cool off because the clear desert skies do not hold heat that well. A night time change of thirty or more degrees is not uncommon.

Winter temperatures generally are in the forties and fifties during the daytime, and for short periods will dip below freezing at night. Rainfall is about eight inches annually. The northern parts of the County, the Enterprise and New Harmony areas of the county, are very similar to the rest of the State of Utah with warm summers and cold winters with a certain amount of snowfall during the winter season.

The county consists of 1,553,000 acres, of which about 16% is private and the other 83% is public land. Of the public land, 70% is administered by the federal government, 5% by state government, and 2% is an Indian Reservation. See Table II for approximate acreage of each category of land.

Table 5
Land Ownership Summary

<u>Land Ownership</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
National Forest - Dixie National Forest	390,000	25%
Bureau of Land Management	700,000	45%
Zion National Park	125,000	8%
Paiute Indian Reservation	27,000	2%
State and Institutional Trust Lands	75,000	5%
Private ownership – including city and county lands	236,000	16%

**Five County Association of Governments website: fcaog.state.ut.us

Current Resource Management Conditions: 1,553,000 acres 100%

Partnerships:

The county recognizes the efforts that the various management agencies have made to inform the county of planning processes underway, or decisions that have been made. The cooperative efforts in Washington County have generally been at a reasonable level. Obviously, there is always room for improvement on the part of the county, and on the part of the other agencies. Given the county's responsibility to all county residents, as well as the county's overall responsibility for the welfare of visitors to the county, whether they are on private or public lands, it follows that the partnership between the managing agencies and the county should be more than simple cooperating agency status. What the county does impacts the public lands, and what the agencies do impacts the residents of the county. Therefore, every effort should be made, at all levels, to coordinate activities, jointly plan as much as possible, and cooperate fully on all levels. That should be the goal of the county and agencies involved in the county.

Consistency:

Washington County enjoys a positive relationship with all of the agencies that manage the federal and state lands in the county. Our association with the various managing agencies during the process that led to the preparation of the county land use plan that was submitted to Congress showed a great degree of cooperation. However, in some instances, county input is gathered after a significant amount of planning has already been done, not always allowing the county to effectively meet our responsibilities and expectations as a planning partner. The county will continue update this county public resource management plan in an effort to more efficiently address the many public land issues that arise, and more fully meet the needs of all the many stakeholders for whom it has responsibility.

Local Economic Impact:

The county is concerned that insufficient weight is often times given to economic impacts when considering public land management practices. There have been changes in management philosophy over time, much of it due to Congressional rules and regulation changes. Often local managers must work within very narrow parameters to solve complex and difficult land use problems. This is further complicated by intense pressure from various advocacy groups, individuals who have had long-standing use access to public lands in ways which may now be limited by changing philosophies. These changes impact the ever increasing numbers of people who use the lands.

The concern of the county is that, in light of all of these factors, socio-economic impacts often become the last consideration in the planning processes and management decisions. This concern is two-fold. First, while the county gives substantial weight to certain subjective values,

such as “sense of community”, rural atmosphere, historic relevance, and local culture and custom when planning, the managing agencies seem limited within their planning processes in their ability to give adequate consideration to such concepts. Second, there is some difference between what the county would consider economically feasible, and what the agencies deem to have economic value. Such concepts are clearly open to much interpretation, given the many ways to evaluate, assess, and balance potential values, both real and conceptual in any planning process. Washington County cannot overstate the importance of giving sufficient weight to all potential socio-economic impacts when public land management decisions are made. The economic needs of the county must be considered when developing plans and making recommendations that affect the custom and culture of the county. This concept is further discussed in the goals and objectives section of this plan.

Another important example of underestimating economic impacts by federal agencies is in the area of transportation and, and RS2477 rights-of-way. The recreation community is wide spread and growing, and generally the impact on communities is very positive. Several extensive and connecting trails systems run throughout the county, and the benefit to the county from recreational activities is very substantial. Yet, it seems sometimes that management practices appear to be more focused on controlling these activities than enhancing appropriate opportunities.

The county is also concerned about the fact that much of the land in the county is being closed to mineral exploration. The western part of the county has not been explored thoroughly with an eye to determining the true mineral potential for more large scale mineral developments even though individual permits and some minimal exploration has been done for the past 150 years. In addition to sand and gravel resources, which continually become more difficult to find and develop, it is known that there are likely other resources yet undeveloped in the county. We know that gold exists in certain areas. Other, often rare, minerals are also known to exist. The western part of the county, as well as some other parts, has not been adequately studied to see what might be found. The county believes that minerals should be extracted with great care for the environment, but the good of the environment should not be used as a tool to close public lands to mineral extraction. There should be a good balance, and due consideration should be given to the economic importance to our natural resources on public land to the county’s overall economic health. Washington County is the only place in the world with enough ore to mine gallium and germanium.

Relative Impacts:

The county acknowledges that the public land belongs to the national public as a whole. However, this does not diminish the fact that the county is more directly affected by local management decisions than those who live outside the county or the state. Washington County is directly impacted by decisions regarding public lands, and is personally accountable to its residents, and therefore should have a significant role in the management decisions made regarding public lands within its boundaries.

There are many stake holder and advocacy groups with seemingly endless proposals for

management of the public lands in Washington County. However, the county asserts that all stakeholder interests in the care and use of our public lands are important, and no single special interest should rise above others nor sway federal managers from their decision-making process, particularly after plans have been completed through the public planning process.

The county supports managing timber resources, utilizing insect-killed timber, improving wildlife habitat, watershed conditions, and fire control. The county also supports preserving the natural scene, and maintaining AUMs for agriculture, a long -term use, to support the local economy. But there is a concern that more and more historically used activities are under increased scrutiny, and the potential for continuing to create special use lands are becoming more and more prevalent.

Washington County has always been a multiple use county. At the present time, with the passage of the land bill by congress, 30 percent of the public land in the county is now single use land. Consequently, lands set aside for single purpose use provide conflict with existing uses, putting undue pressure on federal managing agencies to justify their management decisions and often requiring them to spend large resources of time and money defending those decisions in court. The county's position on designation of special areas is addressed in the policy section of this plan.

It is of concern to the county that local land managers seem to have continually increasing pressures which limit their being able to manage the land resource for the best good of the resource and the public. National scrutiny of every action, combined with the continual litigation over every decision, creates a management problem to a large extent, and limits the ability of those who are closest to the land to make decisions which are best for the land.

Washington County believes that this is an unfortunate by-product of interest advocacy, rapidly growing use, and ballooning national interest in public land management issues, as well as a number of other factors. It is not a healthy atmosphere for managing our public lands. It is the county's hope that cooperative efforts will assist the federal and state managers in their process of making management decisions, and in defending those decisions, with the result being a healthier environment for the resource as well as the user.

Section Five: Statement on Desired Future Management Setting

The difficulty in defining an ideal future management setting lies in the fact that the county does not control all of the lands within the county boundaries. With federal and state lands surrounding all of the private land, there are many management decisions that are made outside the county's influence and reach. No future condition can be ideal unless the county is able to appropriately influence public land management policy in accordance with Federal Law.

An ideal situation would be a blend of purposes and vision, shared by the various public land managers and county leaders in an ongoing effort to protect and conserve our natural resources while working to accommodate growth, planning appropriately for an increased

interface between public and private lands, and preserving for public use and viewing, important historic sites both on public and private lands, while also working for increased economic value. To achieve this blend of vision it will require efforts on the part of both the county and the public land managers. While the county's relationship with our land managers is good, we desire to make it even better.

Due to the interface between public and private lands, county land use policies are always influenced by surrounding public land management policies. The goals of the county are directly tied to state and federal land management practices. The key to future land use management rests on the ability of the county to increase the frequency and effectiveness of a collaborative process.

Elements of a Desired Future Management Setting:

In spite of the growth of Washington County, there is still a good mix of rural and urban development due to its unique mix and location of public and private lands. The county would like to continue the support orderly residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural growth. Development should occur in an orderly manner, and in locations that enhance and preserve the socio-economic well-being of the residents while also contributing to the economic stability of the county. The county will work to identify and preserve appropriate open spaces, connecting trail systems, agricultural areas, and transportation systems, as well as potential commercial and industrial areas. The county has been, and will continue to be, an appealing place to live, work, and visit. It is an area made up of vibrant communities, productive agricultural enterprises, and valuable natural and cultural resources.

In order to preserve vital recreational opportunity, protect the rural lifestyle of many of its residents, encourage and preserve historic agricultural activities, and maintain and provide adequate services, the county has encouraged growth to take place inside existing communities and infrastructure as much as possible. All planning, zoning, and growth must take into account the values important to the residents of the county as identified through the Vision Dixie planning process. Due to the proximity of large areas of public land, the county will work to enhance opportunities provided by the variety of public lands in the county, while working to minimize the impacts from those same lands. The county will remain sensitive to private landowner rights and will work to balance those rights with the public interest.

Basic Future Management Principles:

Federal lands should be managed in a way that protects and improves the health, safety, and environment of our citizens, and improve the performance of the economy without imposing unacceptable or unreasonable costs or impacts to the local structure. The county recognizes that the private sector and private markets are the best engines for economic growth, that regulatory policies should respect the role of state and local governments; and public lands policies and regulations should be effective, consistent, practical, and understandable.

Public land management practices should work to accomplish the following:

1. Protect the integrity of environmental systems and natural resources
2. Preserve resource based industries
3. Promote a robust, diverse, and stable economy
4. Minimize conflicts between land uses
5. Protect public health, safety, and welfare
6. Preserve culture, customs, heritage and economic diversity, and
7. Recognize and protect private rights in federal and state land resources including rights-of-way, grazing permits, water rights, special use permits, leases, contracts, and recreation use permits and licenses.

It is interesting to note the similarities between many these recommended public land policies, and the private land management policies that resulted from the Vision Dixie Project. The Vision Dixie Project provided a summary of guiding principles to guide the development of the private land in the county. These are listed as follows:

1. Plan Regionally, Implement locally,
2. Maintain Air & Water Quality, and conserve water,
3. Guard our “signature” scenic landscapes,
4. Provide rich, connected natural recreation and open space,
5. Build balanced transportation that includes a system of public transportation, connected roads, and meaningful opportunities to bike and walk,
6. Get centered by focusing growth on walk able, mixed-use centers,
7. Direct growth inward,
8. Provide a broad range of housing types to meet the needs of all income levels, family types, and stages of life,
9. Reserve key areas for industry to grow the economic pie,
10. Focused public land conversion should sustain community goals and preserve critical lands.

In studying these principles more closely, many are directly related to those policies for public land maintenance listed above. For purposes of land use planning efforts, and management decisions on public lands in the county, federal and state agencies shall develop and maintain cooperating agency status for all major federal and state land management actions.

Cooperative Conservation:

The county supports state and federal land management that is based on cooperative conservation, meaning actions that relate to the use, enhancement, and enjoyment of natural resources, protection of the environment, or both, and that involves collaborative activity among federal, state, and local governments, private for-profit and non-profit institutions, other non-governmental entities and individuals.

Federal land managers must facilitate cooperative conservation by fully involving local governmental entities including the county commission. In so doing, they should take appropriate account of, and respect the interests of persons with ownership or other legally recognized interests in land and its natural resources. They should also more fully accommodate local participation in federal decision-making, and provide that the programs, projects, and activities are consistent with protecting public health, safety, and welfare. The county will not give its support to projects unless a federal agency has appropriately involved local government entities.

Customs and Culture:

Major land uses of federal state lands in Washington County, include livestock grazing, harvesting of forest products, water source development, and a broad spectrum of recreation activities from primitive use to developed recreation sites, and both motorized and non-motorized use of roads and trails. It is this myriad of land uses that forms the basis for the customs and culture of the citizens of the county.

The traditions of the citizens are based on continuing these land uses. Maintaining the county's customs and culture includes these activities, and maintaining the uses that the Vision Dixie Project identified as being important to the county residents.

The customs and culture of the county is tied closely to the public lands. Close communication and cooperation with public land managers is a necessary part of maintaining the customs and culture of the county. Other important issues include the land's inherent value as open space available for use by the public at large, the land's natural role in providing habitat for flora and fauna, the protection of watersheds and significant scenic landscapes, and its role as a vessel for historical and cultural values associated with human use of the land.

Washington County supports the maintenance and enhancement of the customs and culture of the county, and opposes any change in land use that does not evaluate, mitigate, and minimize impacts to custom and culture, and the economic growth and stability of the county.

Federal managers shall incorporate the social, cultural, and economic needs of the county when developing plans or projects and making recommendations that affect the customs and culture of the county. Furthermore, the consideration process used to assess impacts to county customs and culture shall be cited in federal or state land management plans as well as the steps taken to incorporate protection of the county's customs, culture and historical heritage into each plan and project.

The county will review and respond to federal and state land use and planning issues impacting the county's customs and culture, and make recommendations pertinent to any issue in question. Responsible use of federal lands is a use that benefits the customs, culture, heritage, and economic base of the county.

Federal and state agencies will notify the county of any actions, proposals, policies, or regulations which may impact the customs and culture of the county. The county will review and comment on such federal or state actions. Communication and coordination are two important aspects of maintaining a proper relationship between the county and the public agency's.

Local government agencies, including the county, cities and towns, the school district and the local state college, public health care providers, Five County Associations of Governments, and other local agencies, all have important and useful data and other information regarding economic and cultural trends that may not be available from state or federal data sources. It is the policy of the county that federal and state land managers seek out and take into account data and information available from local sources when developing plans and/or making recommendations, thus providing for close cooperation in all aspects of planning and decision making.

Management of federal and state lands will recognize valid existing rights and interests in federal land. Livestock grazing established by permit and preference, mineral leases, mining claims, recreation permits, and concessionaire contracts, and rights-of-way form the backbone of the county's communities, and their custom and culture.

It is important that these values, as defined by the county's customs, culture, and heritage, be recognized as a resource as important as any other resource relating to public lands. The cities and towns, and the public lands surrounding them are deeply inter-connected and customs and culture must be recognized as a vital resource to be protected, enhanced, and managed in the same manner as any other important natural resource.

In Washington County's desired future condition, all public land management plans and policy making must take into account these community values, and must always reconcile any differences between this plan and federal or state management planning documents prior to adoption and implementation.

The county's desired future condition would include the following elements:

1. Collaboration, communication and cooperation is the key to a desired future condition where public lands play such a dominating role in any goal-setting or planning within the county. The county seeks a balance of objectives with all stakeholders, while voiding conflicting interests that serve no useful purpose. This balance can only be obtained when collaboration is involved at every level of planning and policy-making, and when all stake holders have a role in developing management of the desired future county policy from the ground up.
2. Any desired future condition must also involve an expansion of the tourism and recreation industry, and coordinating public land management policy that allows for and compliments this expansion. The public lands are a tremendous asset, and the county desires to more fully capitalize on the many recreational opportunities on the adjacent public lands within the county. This expansion with accompanying infrastructure will benefit not only county residents, but visitors to the county as well.
3. The county's desired future condition must also include the continued development of the natural resources of the county. This would include expanding the current natural resource industry, along with improvements to infrastructure, access and the permitting process. It should also include expansion of renewable energy.
4. In a desired future condition, the county's customs and culture will be protected as vital and important as any other natural resource associated with our public lands. Since the customs and culture of the county are inseparably connected with the surrounding public lands, public land management policy must account for the county's customs and culture, and must recognize the importance of protecting, enhancing and preserving historic sites and uses, which are part of the county's heritage, and making them available for public visitation. Part of our customs and culture is our system of transportation and rights-of-way for travel throughout the county. These are the things that make up the essential elements of its customs and culture.

Section Six

Planning Guidelines and Policy Statements

The policy statements contained herein are an outgrowth of planning efforts by the county in planning for both public and private lands in the county, the approval by Congress of the Washington County Land Use Bill, and the basic responsibility of the commission to care for the welfare of all the residents of the county.

The county supports multiple uses, sustained yield management of federal and state lands, and will work with the various management agencies to maintain appropriate balance among all users and uses. Maintaining multiple use management practices on federal state lands

is a high county priority. Maintaining adequate public access to federal and state lands and accompanying natural resources is also a county priority.

The county acknowledges that the terms multiple-use and sustained yield may be interpreted many different ways. For purposes of this plan, the county defines sustained yield as the management of resources in a manner that will support a consistent level of use on a year-to-year basis. The county defines multiple-use as the consumptive and non-consumptive uses historically and traditionally allowed to occur on federal and state lands within the county. These uses include, but are not limited to, the following: hunting, fishing, livestock grazing, mining and mineral exploration and extraction, recreation, wildlife habitat management, telecommunications, water resource use, protection and development of timber/woodland products, utility corridors, and county transportation and circulation roads and corridors.

The county asserts that the above uses, as well as many others, are compatible in most management situations, and that true multiple use management creates opportunities for the land to be used for many purposes simultaneously. The county does not define multiple uses of federal and state resources, and will support and participate in efforts to identify appropriate uses and locations for those uses.

Special Land Designation:

Washington County was opposed to additional land being designated as wilderness, over and above the original BLM and Forest Service recommendations. The county supported designation of those areas identified in the plan generally approved by the broad coalition of stake holders that reviewed the public land in the county and precipitated submission of the land use plan to Congress. Additional land was designated in the bill approved by Congress after the county had submitted their recommendation.

There have now been numerous special land designations in Washington County. These include eighteen (18) designated wilderness areas, two (2) National Conservation Areas (NCA), one (1) large Habitat Conservation Area, ten (10) Areas of Special Environmental Concern, many thousands of acres of Critical Habitat, and other special designations.

Washington County, while not in support of many areas of this type, will accept the decisions that have been made on the public lands, and will work closely with the public land managers to develop management plans that will meet the requirements of the public lands, and also be able to be identified as a part of the Washington County General Plan. The only way to make this successful is for close cooperation between the county and the public land managers. The county looks forward to this type of cooperation.

The county is aware of proposals by different interest groups to implement additional special land designations in order to achieve their specific land-use goals. The county is concerned that many of these proposals do not consider the economic impacts to the county, communities, and agencies which special use designations impact. In addition, the wilderness area designation proposals made by wilderness groups have not included input from local

government, communities, nor residents of the county. These proposals have had no public process outside the members of the particular groups involved. The county and its residents should have had an equal voice in determining the validity of such proposals.

All special designations should be made to compliment, rather than conflict with the concept of multiple uses of public lands. These areas should also be in harmony with the customs and culture that have been identified in the county. More attention must be made as to how the designations can be made to harmonize with all other aspects of county planning.

The same concerns that exist in the county relative to the management of BLM lands should apply equally to forest lands in the county. The county appreciates the relationship that it has had as a cooperating agency with the update of the forest lands plan in the county. That same, or even greater, coordination should exist with the BLM in the amending, or updating, of the BLM management plan as a result of the recent Congressional action.

Water Resources:

Water is the life blood of Washington County. Water quality and availability has historically determined the level, type, and location of existing growth. This pattern would continue into the future except for the fact that new distribution systems have made water more available throughout the county. The county encourages and supports the efficient management and use of its water resources. The county also supports the development, adoption, and implementation of water collection, storage, and distribution, as well as the development of conservation plans by municipalities, the water conservancy district, and private water companies. The county also encourages continued cooperation among all water managers and users as water management decisions are made.

The county needs to be involved with state and federal managers in the development of any plans for monitoring of air and water quality. Findings must be coordinated with the county. The county supports management practices that protect vital watersheds.

The county also supports management policies and practices which allow for the future expansion and development of water distribution and storage facilities. The future of the county is completely dependent on available water. The county not only needs a county-wide distribution system to assist any part of the county in time of need, but a redundant supply to avoid simply running out of water at some future date. Any plan or practice whose aim or goal is to thwart the county's ability to access and develop water resources is strongly opposed.

Transportation:

Transportation is critically important to Washington County. The county believes that proper access to public lands is essential, and is an inherent right of every citizen. It is the county's position that no access should be closed except in situations of duplication, danger to the public, or serious threat to the resource, and then only with input and consultation with the county. The county further believes that no closure should occur on any of its RS2477 rights-of-

way assertions without express consent of the county commission. The county's intent is to complete a county-wide transportation plan as a part of the General Plan of the county and will make every effort to coordinate such plan with public land managers to reach consensus insofar as possible.

The county supports general public access through private lands as historically provided and allowed. The county will continue to work with individual land owners as necessary to maintain these traditional thoroughfares while also protecting private rights. It is vitally important that all existing public rights-of-way, including both RS2477 as well as proscriptive rights across private lands, be maintained.

Public Land Consolidation:

Washington County supports efforts to sell, exchange, or consolidate state and federal lands within the county if doing so improves manageability of these lands, benefits county residents, supports the county economic base, or addresses the problem of checkerboard ownership. Specifically, the county will work to identify and consolidate areas and resources that promote economic growth, allow additional or improved resource development, protect watershed, reduce access problems, and/or improve management. The county, through the county commission, will actively participate in all exchange or consolidation discussions.

If it will benefit the county economically, the commission may look favorably upon the exchange of state trust lands to other areas of the state where it might be beneficial both to the county and to the trust land administration in terms of economic benefit to make such land exchanges.

The county supports any increase in private land holdings in the county, and cannot support any net loss of private land for any purposes. The county believes that it is appropriate to transfer from federal ownership, through sale or exchange, certain lands to private ownership if such a transaction will benefit the county's economic base. If private to public land transactions occur, the county will work with the public land managers to assure that an equivalent acreage and value of public lands are made available for transfer to private ownership.

Partnerships:

It is the county's policy to partner with public land management agencies in the planning and management process. The county's participation and responsibilities will be guaranteed by, and contingent upon, a formal cooperative agreement. Any formal county cooperative agreements shall be contingent upon the county's involvement at the earliest stage of the proposed process. The county would like to see increased coordination among the county, the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Forest Service, Utah Department of Natural Resources, and other land management agencies. It is the county's belief that all land use decisions must be based on sound principles of consensus building, and consideration of local interests. The county's objectives in this regard are further discussed in the goals and objectives section of this plan.

Local Economic Impact:

As discussed in the current management condition section of this plan, it is the position of the county to support only those public land plans and decisions that result in a sustainable net benefit to the county's local economy. The county's cooperative agreement should include provisions for a quantitative estimate of the economic effects of all proposed management decisions. These estimates should be generated in consultation with the county. Further, it is the policy of the county that all decisions regarding land use management must take into account the history, culture, and customs of the county as defined by the activities and values that residents of the county, in the past, present, and future, depend upon for well being and subsistence. Customs and culture are defined as the activities and decisions that make the county what it is and has historically been, and the county will oppose activities and plans that will adversely impact the customs and culture of Washington County.

The county supports efforts to maintain or improve the overall economic base of the county through the judicious use and enjoyment of federal and state lands in the county. The county policy is that economic diversity and long-term stability are beneficial to the welfare of county residents. Any proposed change in land use must evaluate, mitigate, and minimize impacts to customs and culture and the economic stability of the county. The prioritizing of any one multiple use should only occur after the impacts to other multiple uses are fully quantified and mitigated. Any proposal to close the federal lands to a particular use must be approved by the county after a public hearings, and meetings with county officials.

Relative Impacts:

The position of the county is that the weight given to public comment and opinion should be directly proportional to the geographic and economic impact of the decision. The county policy is to provide clear and timely comments, and encourage its residents to do the same.

Consistency:

It is the preference of the county that the managing agencies coordinate with the county at the earliest possible time on all planning. The county has limited personnel to dedicate to public land planning. Nevertheless the county will make every effort to participate in such efforts to achieve consistency in planning documents.

Wildlife Management:

Wildlife management issues on public lands have the potential to impact the county in the most substantial manner. Wildlife management can not only impact public land use and access, but can also affect land uses, often leading to restrictions and even takings. Recreational factors, such a hunting and fishing, are a vital part of the county's economic base.

Recovery efforts for sensitive, threatened and endangered species must evaluate,

mitigate, and support the county's customs and culture and economic viability. Wildlife management efforts shall reduce predation of sensitive species, increase hunting and fishing opportunities within appropriate carrying capacities, decrease game damage conflicts, and generally balance wildlife numbers with other factions, representing the customs and culture and multiple use values of the county. The county supports responsible wildlife habitat preservation, development, and management.

The county policy is that federal agencies shall fully quantify and cause mitigation measures to be adopted that would effectively mitigate impact to the county wildlife populations in carrying out animal damage management activities. Public land managers shall:

1. Allow currently recognized methods of predator control, including aerial gunning of predators, as viable options for predator control on public lands in the county.
2. Conduct non-predator animal damage management such as controlling small mammal populations, and necessary environmental analysis and disclosure on public lands.
3. Coordinate with other federal and state agencies to improve effectiveness of control program activities conducted on federal and state lands.
4. Use an integrated approach to the prevention of animal damage and management of animal damage control programs. Consider a full range of methods, including physical barriers, repellents, habitat manipulation, biological controls, improvement of soil fertility, pesticides, and hunting and trapping. Use licensed hunting, fishing, and trapping as a control technique where practicable.
5. Evaluate the effect of agency actions on trends in hunting participation and, where appropriate to address declining trends, implement actions that expand and enhance hunting opportunities for the public.
6. Consider the economy and recreational values of hunting in agency actions.
7. Manage wildlife habitats on public lands in a manner that expands and enhances hunting opportunities, including through the use of hunting in wildlife management planning, and
8. Work collaboratively with state governments to manage and conserve game species and their habitats in a manner that respects private property rights and state management authority over wildlife resources.

Recreation:

Activities which traditionally define recreation and tourism in Washington County include, but are not limited to big game hunting, trapping, fishing, off-road vehicle use, mountain

biking, hiking, camping, boating, etc. A majority of these activities are found on public lands. Visitors to these areas directly impact the county by drawing on county-provided infrastructure such as, law enforcement, emergency-medical, search and rescue, waste disposal services, and general commercial services. Many of the store owners, restaurants, hotels and motels, and many more interests depend on seasonal recreation and tourism for their livelihoods. Much of the recreational activity in the county is found in the unincorporated area of the county, outside of the organized recreation facilities found in many of the cities and towns. This recreation, mostly found through using the public lands, is a tremendous economic asset to the county.

It is the county's position that federal and state land managers should do everything possible to enhance recreational opportunities on public lands and that such management should be compatible with the principles of multiple use, and sustained yield. Any management decisions which restrict recreational activities or access to recreation area must be done in consultation with the county and must be based on best scientific information.

Customs and Culture:

To reiterate concerns in the current management conditions section, the residents of the county highly value the quality of life the customs and culture of the county provide. Many residents have traditionally earned their livelihoods from activities associated with the county's customs and culture.

While the economy of the county is not as dependent on the legacy activities of agriculture as it once was, many residents continue to rely on these or similar activities either as a primary or a secondary income resource. The livestock industry has suffered significantly by the reduction of grazing permits over the last number of years.

County residents greatly prize the outdoor recreation opportunities detailed in the previous section. These activities are a way of life in the county, having sprung up from a traditional western lifestyle heavily dependent on the land as a natural resource to provide sustenance and enjoyment. At its core, the county is a place where its residents enjoy a rural environment and closeness to nature. These activities have been kept alive and grown as they are passed from generation to generation. Parents, children, and grandchildren enjoy the outdoors together as a family unit. Access to public lands in the county for multiple uses is a prized privilege, even a right inherent in residency that is the foundation of a lifestyle style that has kept families here for generations. In recent years, and into the future, it is the main attraction for new residents seeking a rural, family centered way of life.

The county's quality of life and economy is, and will continue to be, dependent upon these activities. Since the county is directly dependent upon all its natural resources, management decisions affecting public land directly impacts and potentially changes the county's customs and culture. Therefore, a critical tie exists between the use of private, federal, and state natural resources and the continuance of the way of life in Washington County. It is imperative that the county, stakeholders, and informed representatives review natural resource issues as they occur, to assure public land management decisions do not negatively impact the

county's customs and culture.

The county must oppose any change in land use that does not evaluate, mitigate, and minimize impacts to customs and culture and the economic future of the county. Federal and state agencies should always consider the social, cultural, and economic needs of the county when developing plans and making recommendations that affect the customs and culture of the county. The county recommends federal and state agencies enhance opportunities for responsible use of public lands which benefit the customs and culture and economic base of the county. Federal and state agencies should always notify the county of any actions or regulations which may impact the customs and culture of the county.

Vegetation:

The county supports efforts to conduct plant surveys to validate existing data and add new plant inventory data. Recovery planning efforts for sensitive, threatened, and endangered plant species shall evaluate, mitigate, and support the county's customs and culture and economic viability. The county supports locally driven efforts to identify desired plant communities that do not compromise the customs and culture and economy of the county.

Visual:

Washington County recognizes that different levels of scenic values on federal lands in the county require different levels of management. While management of an area with high scenic value might be focused on preserving the existing character of the landscape, management of an area with little scenic value might allow for major modifications to the landscape. Federal land management agencies shall conduct assessments of visual impacts in determining how an area should be managed, with the goal of protecting the visual resource while not burdening authorized land uses and maintaining economic stability.

It is Washington County's policy in considering visual resource management objectives, federal and state land management agencies shall recognize the importance of communication sites, electric transmission lines, and transportation corridors to the security, health and welfare of the county's residents.

Weeds and Pests:

Federal and state land management agencies shall participate in cooperative efforts with federal, state, county and private land managers to enhance cooperative weed management in the county. Early detection and control of noxious weed and insect infestations are essential to the public health, welfare and economy of the citizens of the county. Neither the county, nor the public land managers can be successful in controlling noxious weeds without joint cooperation. It is also important to the county that the public land managers control pests on the public lands in order to protect the forest land and other areas where pests become a problem.

Mosquito control on federal and state lands in the county should be permitted in order to reduce the risk of transmission of West Nile Virus and other diseases that pose a threat to the health of humans, livestock and wildlife. The county has an active mosquito control program, which should be extended, as necessary to include public lands.

Wild Land Fire:

Fire management strategies shall consider fire fighter and public safety and protect human life, property and communities. There shall be a high level of cooperation between agencies and fire fighter organizations in the county. Federal agencies will incorporate local fire department plans and policies into fire suppression and control plans.

Forestry:

The private use of timber products from federal and state lands in the county for posts, poles, wood cutting to provide fuel for those in the county needing fuel for winter heating, and Christmas trees, etc., shall be continued as an allowable use. A sustainable wood products industry on federal and state lands in the county is an important aspect of economic diversity. Fire, timber harvesting, and treatment programs are to be managed in a way to promote the forest health, reduce disease and insect infestation, and prevent waste of forest products while providing opportunities for local residents or small business.

Decisions and conclusions for forestry management should be consistent with the following:

1. Avoid management scenarios that result in a static forest condition
2. Do not restrict management actions to a particular size or age of wood material
3. Concentrate activities on current condition as compared with desired condition
4. Develop an aggressive time table for management implementation
5. Use a systematic diagnostic approach to anticipate forest health programs.
6. Work with and not against nature
7. Accurately account for forest health costs and use a long term risk analysis
8. Prepare the forest for inevitable periods of drought and encourage research into climate/forest health relationship and aforementioned forest management scenarios.

Lands and Realty:

Federal land management agencies need to continue to make suitable lands available for disposal under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP), Special Uses Act, and follow the requirements of the land use plan approved by Congress for the disposal of certain BLM lands in the county. Some additional criteria for land disposal shall include the following:

1. Federal lands shall be available for disposal when such disposal meets the important public objective of community expansion or economic development, or when the disposal would serve the public interest.
2. The design and disposal of all federal land disposals, including land adjustments and exchanges, shall be carried out to the benefit of the citizens of the county in an expeditious manner.
3. There shall be no net loss of private lands in the county. Federal land management agencies shall not acquire any private land or access rights in private lands in the county without first ensuring that, at a minimum, parity in land ownership is maintained, and private property interests are protected and enhanced.
4. Federally managed lands that are difficult to manage or which lie in isolated tracts shall be identified for disposal, where otherwise found suitable for non-federal use and development.
5. The county shall be notified of, consulted with, and otherwise involved in all federal and state land adjustments in the county. County concurrence shall be required prior to such adjustments.
6. All existing utility corridors must be maintained and used to support additional capability for electric transmission and flow of oil and gas throughout the state and region. New Corridors may need to be designated in areas where renewable energy projects or communications technology developments come on line. Such corridors are critical in supporting state and national security and economic objectives.

Law Enforcement:

Washington County and the State of Utah have primary jurisdiction for law enforcement throughout the county. All federal law enforcement activities will be fully coordinated through the county with the county sheriff's office.

The county will maximize the use of a cooperative law enforcement program, to improve protection of persons and their property when visiting federal and state lands, and to utilize the opportunity to cooperate with land management agencies in carrying out their specific

responsibilities related to the land management.

It is the county policy to provide protection to the public and their property through cooperation with other law enforcement agencies. Federal and state land management agencies will make available sites for strategic location of communication towers to aid in law enforcement activities.

Livestock Grazing:

Livestock grazing on federal and state lands in the county shall continue, at levels consistent with the custom and culture, and proper stewardship of the resource. The continued viability of livestock operations within the county by management of land and forage resources, by proper optimization of animal unit months for livestock in forage resources, in accordance with supportable science and the multiple use provisions of federal and state law.

Federal land management agencies will not adjust animal unit months (AUMs) on public lands, without scientifically based justification and full consultation between the permittee and the administering agency. Federal management agencies will not permit the relinquishment, transfer, or retirement of livestock grazing AUMs in favor of conservation, wildlife, or other uses besides livestock grazing.

Federal and state land managers will promote public respect for private structures, corrals, fences, water development, etc., on federal land in an effort to reduce vandalism, educate land users, and promote multiple-use concepts.

AUMs should not be placed in a suspended use category unless there is a rational and scientific termination that the condition of the rangeland allotment or district in question will not sustain the animal unit months proposed to be placed in suspended use. Any grazing AUMs that are placed in a suspended use category must be returned to active use when range conditions improve. State-of-the-art monitoring data should be the basis for grazing management decisions on BLM and forest service grazing allotments.

Grazing of livestock is mandated by the county land bill to continue in approved wilderness areas.

Minerals:

Mineral development has been limited in Washington County. The Goldstrike mine was a large-scale gold mining operation. The Apex mine is an ongoing operation relative to scarce minerals, gallium and germanium, and the only mine in the world with enough ore to mine economically. The county is convinced that our mineral resources have never been adequately explored. How many more gold strike or apex mines could there be in Washington County. In addition, sand and gravel resources are becoming very difficult to obtain in the county. As part of any planning effort on the public land, a county-wide review of all potential sand and/or gravel sites should be identified in order to be able to project the ability of the county to secure

these sites for use in the future growth and development. Sand and gravel may well be the most important mineral to be identified in the county for the use of future generations of potential users.

Federal and state agencies shall analyze and consider all fiscal and economic impacts to the minerals industry, the county, and other local governments, and to the residents of the county from any proposed land management changes or natural-resource related plans. Planning shall consider up-to-date mineral potential reports.

Consultation, Coordination, and Cooperation:

It is the policy of Washington County that federal and state land management agencies:

1. Establish effective government-to-government relationships with Washington County
2. Identify a county relations liaison to serve as the first point of contact with the county commission and also the person who will generally initiate agency contact with the county.
3. Implement federal land management programs and activities consistent with, and respecting the county's rights and fulfilling the federal government's legally mandated coordination responsibility with the county.
4. Manage federal lands and resources in coordination with the county
5. Work to reduce or remove legal or administrative program impediments that inhibit the agency's and the county's capacity to work directly and effectively with each other.
6. Consult with the county on matters that may affect the public's rights and interests.
7. Promptly notify the county at the earliest opportunity of proposed policy, plans, projects or actions that may affect the public's rights or interests in order to provide the county an opportunity for meaningful dialogue on potential implications and effects.
8. Develop, in consultation and collaboration with the county, agreements and statements of relationships that help clarify the county's rights and interests, and set forth procedures and protocols for consultation, including the points of contact. Involve designated county representatives, including staff, in the development of proposed policies, plans, projects, or actions, where appropriate.
9. Involve the county early in the planning process, and in the preparation of in-

depth socio-economic information.

10. Fully consider recommendations by the county to address county concerns on proposed decisions.
11. Inform the county as to how its information and recommendations were considered in public land management decisions, including explanations particularly in the event that county input was not adopted or incorporated.
12. Document the process and actions taken to consult with the county, the results of those actions, and how the public land manager's final decision was communicated to the county. This consultation review and monitoring process shall involve the county officials and representatives.
13. Conduct annual planning meetings for specific projects that include participation by livestock permittees, affected adjacent land owners, and other multiple use interests in affected areas, as well as county representatives.

Section Seven: County Goals and Objectives

Coordination:

Goal:

Develop close coordination with the State and Public Land Managers involved in developing plans within Washington County, specifically as it relates to the implementation of the land use plan recently approved by the Congress of the United States of America.

To create a cooperative agency status with federal and state planning agencies involved in planning the public land in Washington County for the purpose of jointly completing the planning that is required under the Congressional land use plan in Washington County.

Objective:

Work in harmony with the federal, state, and any other public land managers that may be involved with the planning made necessary by the Congressional land use plan so that the county plan, and the public land plans, mirror each other to promote a united land plan to the public for the future of the county.

Economic Preservation and Development:

Goals:

Preserve and develop the county's customs and cultures.

Expand the county's current economic base.

Stop or reverse any erosion of the county's economic base due to increased restrictions and limitations on the use of public lands in Washington County.

Objectives:

Promote solid growth of historical economic pursuits in the county, especially those associated with recreation, hunting, fishing, ranching, farming, timbering, mining, and other recreational activities on public and private lands.

Work with federal and state regulatory agencies to reduce costs in both time and material in complying with regulations and permitting processes, including recreational permitting.

Agricultural Lands:

Goals

Protect and preserve agriculturally productive land, both public and private, for continued agricultural purposes.

Objectives:

Take a proactive role in sustaining or expansion of agricultural uses on public and private lands.

Encourage, and promote the continuation of irrigated land use.

Natural Resources:

Goals

Facilitate prudent development, use, and conservation of natural and renewable resources, in such a way as to ensure their continued availability for future generations.

Objectives:

Facilitate development of natural resources such as coal, oil, natural gas, and other minerals using common sense and good stewardship.

Provide a proactive approach to land use policy and implementation decisions at the local level in order to create sustainable yields of our natural resources.

Work with federal and state managers to expedite the permitting process, allowing potential developers more streamlined access to available resources.

Scenic Areas and Historic Sites:

Goal:

Preserve, protect, enhance, and make available for public visitation, scenic areas, historic sites, and cultural sites in Washington County.

Objectives:

Identify and delineate areas which a majority of county residents believe have outstanding qualities, and which add significantly to Washington County's culture and customs, and which may have value in the county's tourism industry and in enhancing capacity for economic development.

Identify, preserve, restore, and protect, significant natural and man-made cultural sites, buildings, and locations.

Make these sites, particularly those that a part of the customs and culture of the county, available for visitation and enjoyment by all residents of the county.

Work these historic, scenic, and cultural sites into tourism and economic development efforts in order to better utilize the intrinsic value of these resources to the benefit of county residents as well as visitors to the area.

Wildlife:

Goals:

Ensure the proper management of water resources and responsible management of public lands in order to sustain viable populations of wildlife.

Wildlife is an important recreational resource in Washington County, and must be managed in such a way as to benefit the public as well as enhancing wildlife habitat and preserving proper wildlife populations.

Objectives:

Provide incentives to landowners providing critical wildlife winter habitat.

All planning and zoning, as well as any future development, shall take into consideration wildlife, especially critical winter range. All proposed subdivision plats shall be evaluated for their effect on wildlife and on neighboring agricultural and other adjacent uses.

Federal and state agencies will hold wildlife and feral populations to objective levels that will not damage agriculture.

Managers should work to assure that objective wildlife levels benefit the local economy as well as fitting the overall principles of multiple-use.

Recreation:

Goal:

Support and create quality recreational opportunities for county residents and visitors.

Provide an opportunity to benefit more fully from the unique rural characteristics of Washington County's communities, their customs and culture.

Create an opportunity to more appropriately benefit from the many recreational opportunities in the county's public lands.

Objectives:

Upgrade or expand picnic and camping facilities.

Improve access to public lands and recreation sites with no net loss of access as recognized in federal statute 2477 revised.

Encourage development of increased opportunities for year round recreation.

Develop inter-connecting roads and trails wherever possible, to allow recreational users to connect with major OHV trails. Create a county-wide travel plan which addresses all roads and trail systems essential to the county's recreation plan, and identifying areas where improvements need to be made or connections need to be created.

Renewable Energy:

Goals:

Due to the great need for alternative energy sources, and due to the large areas of public lands within the county, every effort should be used to identify and develop renewable energy resources.

Objectives:

Develop an alternative energy resource development plan, identifying all lands within the county which may be suitable for solar, wind, or geothermal energy development.

Through the normal planning and zoning process, zone appropriately identified lands for renewable energy production.

Identify electric transmission corridors and transportation needs for appropriate access to lands which may be suitable for alternative energy development.

Where possible, provide incentives for alternative energy development within the county.

Section Eight Monitoring

Progress toward the Desired Resource Management Setting will be measured by working towards, and ultimately achieving, the Goals and Objectives as set forth in this County Resource Management plan. Regular progress reports will be made to the county commission by the land

use authority and staff, regarding progress toward the desired management setting and toward accomplishment of the goals and objectives. Recommendations may be made to the plan from time to time by the land use authority to the county commission.

Partnerships:

Progress regarding planning and development changes on the state and public lands will be made by continued close relationships with public land managers in a cooperative effort with the county.

Local Economic Impact:

Of concern are economic changes which could affect the economic well-being of county residents. Much of the county employment is linked to the use of public lands, any policy changes or management decisions which may impact the county's customs and culture, or affect its overall economic well-being, must be addressed as soon as the county becomes aware of these changes.

Public Involvement:

The county should keep the public informed as much as possible, in understanding public land policy. The county should take into account feedback from the public in evaluating public land issues and in determining the county's policy and position. The recent Vision Dixie project was an excellent example of the use of public involvement now being used in this planning effort. The decisions and recommendations of the public participation of this plan looked at all public land issues, preservation issues, and questions as to where development should or should not occur. A more detailed look at the BLM land designations was done by the broad coalition of stake holders involved in the preparation of the land use plan that was submitted to Congress for their approval.